



MidPenn Legal Services

LEGAL SERVICES CORP

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November 5, 2007

John Eidelman, Esq.
Program Counsel
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street N.W. 3rd Floor
Washington, DC 20007-3500

RE: Resolution of the Board of Directors of MidPenn Legal Services

Dear John:

Enclosed please find a copy of the Resolution adopted by the Board of Directors of MidPenn Legal Services on October 18, 2007 in support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement with LSC-Funded Programs.

Sincerely,

Rhodia Thomas
Executive Director
MidPenn Legal Services

Enclosure

**RESOLUTION
OF
Board of Directors of MidPenn Legal Services (MPLS)
In Support of Enhanced Private Attorney Involvement
with LSC-Funded Programs**

Whereas, the Legal Services Corporation and the programs it funds, including MidPenn Legal Services, have long recognized that the overarching values of private attorney involvement to LSC-funded programs are increased access, increased human and capital resources, and increased pro bono commitment; and

Whereas, at its October 2007 meeting, the Board of Directors of the Legal Service Corporation adopted Resolution 2007-003 supporting and encouraging private attorney involvement and urging governing boards of LSC-funded programs to collaborate with other organizations to effectively engage lawyers in pro bono representation and other services that benefit low-income persons; and

Whereas, the LSC Board of Directors resolution builds upon the following national LSC initiatives:

- The October 2005 LSC report, *Documenting the Justice Gap in America: The Current Unmet Civil Legal Needs of Low-Income Americans*, which found that 50 percent of potential clients requesting assistance from an LSC grantee were turned away for lack of resources on the part of the program;
- The *LSC Strategic Directions 2006-2010*, which calls upon LSC to increase public awareness of and support for legal services to low-income persons in order to respond appropriately to more of their legal needs;
- *The LSC Performance Criteria*, which consider, in evaluating a program's legal representation and other activities intended to benefit the low-income population in its service area, whether that program effectively integrates private attorneys into its work in order to supplement the amount and effectiveness of its representation and other services;
- The Provision for the Delivery of Legal Services Committee of the LSC Board of Directors 2006 meetings, which highlighted the potential, opportunities and challenges of private attorney involvement and determined ways in which this critical resource can be used more effectively by LSC-funded programs as a means to help closed the justice gap;
- The unanimous adoption in January 2007 by the LSC Board of Directors of a strategic work plan entitled *Action Plan for Private Attorney Involvement: Help Close the Justice Gap, Unleash the Power of Pro Bono*, which highlights the benefits of engaging private attorneys to help represent clients of LSC-funded programs and describes ways in which the LSC Board and staff will work to expand private attorney involvement.
- The American Bar Association's Model Rule 6.1 and similar state bar rules note the professional responsibility of every lawyer to provide pro bono legal assistance to persons of limited means;

Whereas, in Pennsylvania, we recognize the enormous unmet civil legal needs of the indigent throughout our state and our own service area (Adams, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Centre, Clearfield, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, Schuylkill, York) and the commitment of the private Bar and our local Bar Associations to assist us in providing access to justice for such individuals:

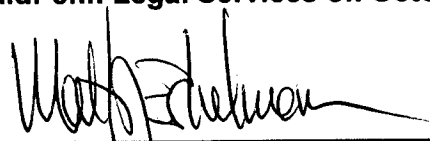
Whereas, the Pennsylvania Bar Association's House of Delegates, at its meeting on June 22, 2007, resolved that each Pennsylvania attorney should comply with the local/county bar association pro bono aspirational goal, expectation and/or rule, where the attorney's practice is conducted and where no such goal, expectation or rule is in place, then the attorney should, on an annual basis, take at least one new pro bono matter or continue work on an ongoing pro bono matter or provide significant direct legal service on behalf of those who cannot afford representation or make a significant financial contribution to a nonprofit organization that provides legal services to persons of limited means;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Board of Directors of MidPenn Legal Services in an effort to help close the justice gap in Pennsylvania and particularly those counties of Adams, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Centre, Clearfield, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Huntingdon, Juniata, Lancaster, Lebanon, Mifflin, Perry, Schuylkill, York Counties, supports and encourages private attorney involvement with MidPenn Legal Services and will endeavor to:

- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in our service area to develop and facilitate educational efforts that demonstrate the extent of the unmet civil legal need and encourage collective responsibility within our service area by both public and private entities to help meet this unmet civil legal need;
- Collaborate with other organizations and entities in our service area to develop effective strategies for engaging lawyers in pro bono representation and other services that benefit low-income persons;
- Collaborate with the Pennsylvania Bar Association and the county bar associations in our program area, access to justice entities, law firms and corporate law departments, law schools and clinics, government and military law offices and state and federal courts to fully implement the PBA Resolution adopted on June 22, 2007.
- Develop strategies that encourage pro bono, including creative recruitment methods and delivery models, attorney practice and continuing legal education rules, and training, mentoring, support and recognition of volunteers.

Be It Further Resolved, that the **Board of Directors of MidPenn Legal Services** will promote, support and encourage private attorney involvement initiatives by publicizing and recognizing private attorney involvement in the work of MPLS and by collaborating with national, state and local organizations to create opportunities for such publicity and recognition.

Adopted by the Board of Directors of MidPenn Legal Services on October 18, 2007.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Eshelman', written over a horizontal line.

Matthew J. Eshelman, Board Chair